

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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The Bible is All You Need!

We know that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and that it is relevant to our lives today. Now we will consider the all-sufficiency of the Bible. “Sufficient” means “as much as is needed or required, enough.” Is the Bible enough, or do we need something in addition to it to know and understand God’s will? Please consider the following passages.

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

“All Scripture” is all that man needs to make him complete and thoroughly equipped for every good work. What more could we need? “As His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness...” (2 Pet. 1:3). God’s word gives us everything we need to know. There isn’t anything else that we need.

“And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:30-31).

The gospels never claim to be an exhaustive record of the life of Jesus. John did not record everything that Jesus said and did, but what John did record was enough to produce belief.

“Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3).

In the original language, the phrase “once for all” means “of perpetual validity, not requiring repetition” (Thayer). This means that it was given once, and that is enough. It doesn’t need to be repeated. We don’t need to meet periodically to reconsider its validity.

“If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Rev. 22:18-19; see also Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:5-6).

God’s word is complete. Anything more is too much, anything less is not enough. We must be content with the Bible the way it is.

“For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it” (Isa. 55:10-11).

The Bible may not accomplish everything we think it should, but it accomplishes everything God wants it to accomplish. It is capable of doing everything God intends for it to do. One may be surprised at the number of people who deny the all sufficiency of the Bible. Most denominations have a written creed. Why does a church need a written creed if the Bible is all-sufficient? The very existence of creed books denies the all sufficiency of the Bible. Some people insist that things like tradition and personal experience are just as weighty and authoritative as the Word of God. Others believe God has given us additional revelation that must be followed. The Bible alone is equal to the purpose that God intended for it. It is all that you need to live a life that pleases God and to secure eternal salvation. The Bible.

- Heath Rogers, via Truth Magazine, May, 2008

Young Mother Agonized Over Abortion

Twenty-two month old Alex Passons is a fair-haired, bouncy, lovable boy who has no idea of the life-and-death struggle that went on in his mother's mind just thirty months ago. His mother, Melissa, came very close to ridding herself of the embarrassing "blob of tissue" that was Alex early in his gestation.

Melissa and Alex's story is a ray of hope in the grim wasteland of death and accompanying mountainous guilt which is so often the reality of many of today's young people. Our prayer is that this true story will help others find hope in the midst of what may seem to be a hopeless trap of their own making.

Melissa grew up in the church and was active in the church's youth ministry. Her parents are godly people and strong supporters of their church. As a teenager she not only attended church but became a youth leader. Everyone at church saw her as a wonderful Christian young woman.

At that time she thought God loved her because she was so loveable. But like many other teens, Melissa became sexually active at seventeen. When she and a young man "fell in love" and planned to marry she reasoned that made sex all right. The relationship didn't last - but once begun, sex with other partners continued. She began to live a double life - her home and church-life and her life in the world.

At the age of 21, doctors told Melissa she would never be able to have children. That news brought a tinge of disappointment, but also relief. Now sex, she reasoned, would really be free of consequences! But four years later what the doctors said was impossible, happened. She was pregnant. At that point Alex was definitely not a nice surprise, but a major problem. Her first thought was to keep the baby, but then she didn't want to raise a child in the life-style she was living. Abortion seemed to be her "best" solution.

Melissa sought the advice of three close friends who had chosen abortions as their "best" solution. She asked them about their experiences and what she got was horror stories. One definitely felt her baby move, trying to escape the powerful vacuum which would suck its body out in pieces. Another told Melissa she heard her baby scream in pain as it was being killed. The third suffered nightmares that still continue, though her abortion was eight years ago.

Then Melissa called AAA Women's Services in her home town of Chattanooga, Tennessee. The counselor reminded her of King David's illicit romance with Bathsheba, and how he added murder to his sin of sex out of wedlock. She pointed out that having Bathsheba's husband killed did not make David's life any better. When Melissa thought that through, she understood that killing her baby would not make her life any better, but worse. She couldn't kill her baby.

Also, for the first time in her life Melissa realized she didn't deserve God's love or salvation. She said, "I realized I couldn't earn salvation - none of us can. It is a gift from God. I fell on my face and cried and cried and cried. I begged God for His mercy. And he met me where I was."

Today, she has both Alex and a message for young women who are either now, or are considering becoming, sexually active. "I don't want others to make my mistakes," she said. The first time she shared her testimony publicly was at a junior high/senior high girls'

retreat when Alex was six months old. It wasn't planned, except by God. It just came out, and Melissa was shocked at what she had said in front of strangers. Two months later, however, one of the girls who heard her testimony related to Melissa that a friend of hers had been present, and as a result had repented of her lifestyle. She broke up with the boy she had been sleeping with.

By now Melissa has shared her story a dozen times, and is overjoyed when she hears she has made a difference.

As one who has been there and come back, Melissa also has a bit of counsel for churches:

- Teach your young people abstinence.
- Know what to do with kids who are sexually active and kids who become pregnant.
- When they are ready for it, restore them-not only to church fellowship but even to leadership positions they previously held. "Some girls never find restoration in the church," she noted, adding: "Peter denied the Lord three times, but he wasn't kicked out."

First Corinthians 6:9-11 is now one of her favorite Bible passages - especially verse 11: "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." She recommends it highly to the girls she talks to, and to their churches.

- Pulpit Helps Staff

3 Ways to Deal with Church Quitters

Are you a quitter? Most would say no, but there are lots of ways we quit.

Some statistics say as many as 95 percent of dieters fail. With 45 million Americans dieting each year, there's some quitting going on.

Should I ask about your daily quiet time? Sadly, I realize I'm a quitter. I love the benefit of personal Bible reading and prayer, but I drift away. Regularly.

It's hard to be critical of people who stop regularly attending church. I can't imagine stopping, but statistics say it happens all the time. People leave church; maybe not all at once, but they stop regularly attending, move to occasionally coming and then disappear.

The same thing happened to me this year at my local gym. I was going every day, then 2-3 days a week, then I quit. And my membership lapsed. Within two months, I realized that my pants were shrinking and I didn't feel as good about myself.

That's the time the gym needed to contact me and ask me to come back. But instead, I didn't hear from them. Several months went by until a friend invited me back.

What about your church? What do you do about quitters? Here are three ways to deal with them:

1. Monitor what regular attendance means. When a credit card is used in an odd, non-regular way, an alert is given for someone to check on your card. Churches need to decide: what is the "regular" pattern for members' attendance so we can send out an alert when people are wavering. Small groups can monitor this easily by holding better accountability.

2. Send an alert. Is that an email, a personal letter or a call? If someone is slowing down in attendance, it's an excellent opportunity for ministry. Is work, home, stress the reason? Sickness, death, pain? Or maybe they're questioning what church has to offer them. It's easier to reach them now by ministering to them.

3. Know the time of pain. This is the moment I expanded beyond my pants waistline after I quit the gym. If people stop going to church, there's a time that they should miss something. You need to determine that timeframe and send another alert to contact them. If you find people don't miss you, then you may have discovered a greater ministry issue.

The key to all of this? Make sure you're keeping good records of people who "try" your church. Keep an email or number so you can contact them — and then do it.

The gym had a lot of my personal information (thanks to their contract) but never contacted me once. Shame on them. And shame on you if you're not contacting people who drift away.

In case you were wondering, I'm back at the gym, and all my pants seem to fit better. Now, that's a great benefit!

- Mark MacDonald

> "Ask your preacher where the Bible says preachers should wear the title "Reverend". Compare his answer with Psalm 111:9!"

- > “Jesus is the only fountain who can satisfy the thirsty soul!”
 - > “The mind is like a parachute; it doesn’t work properly unless it is open!”
 - > “Some “Christians” are like lightning bugs - they keep going on and off!”
 - > “If some men grew physically at the rate they grow spiritually, they would spend their lives in a play-pen!”
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THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: Guest Speaker: Greg Needham; Sunday evening: Guest Speaker: Tim Powell.

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

HEAR THE GOSPEL

(Romans 10:14-17; John 20:30-31; Romans 1:15-17)

BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST

(Acts 8:37; John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6)

REPENT OF PAST SINS

(Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30)

CONFESS CHRIST

(Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37)

BE BAPTIZED

(Romans 6:3-4; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:36-39; 1 Peter 3:21)

LIVE A FAITHFUL LIFE

(Revelation 2:10; 2 Peter 1:5-11; John 15:1-8; Hebrews 10:23-25)